

COLLOQUY

Webster's Dictionary defines colloquy as mutual discourse. Readers are encouraged to submit additions, corrections, and comments about earlier articles appearing in Word Ways. Comments received at least one month prior to publication of an issue will appear in that issue.

The article on Dmitri Borgmann elicited more reader comment than any other one in recent memory. Murray Pearce: Borgmann was a fascinating character and quite obviously a difficult person to know. Dave Morice: I thoroughly enjoyed [the Borgmann article] and I was surprised that so much more personal info about him could be gotten. Too bad he was so reclusive...the article brought him, the man, to life, warts and all. Harry Partridge: Faith's devastating article really trashes poor old DAB...so he got his esoteric references the old-fashioned way--he stole them. Jeff Grant: Faith's story was a real eye-opener! He certainly fits into the category of 'eccentric genius'. Regardless of his personal quirks, he will always be remembered for his logological works. It was Language on Vacation that really fired my interest, and I consider it a great honor to have had Dmitri's advice and assistance with the 'Palindromicon'. Raymond Love: Was fascinated by Faith's article...would like to see someone undertake a feature-length article or possibly a book on his life. Eccentricity sells. Philip Cohen: Faith's article was fascinating as a filler-out of earlier hints. Mike Morton: I was very interested to read her article on Borgmann. Fascinating and sad, as are many geniuses, I suppose. Martin Gardner: Fascinating article on Borgmann. I had no idea he was so paranoid...sad to learn about Dmitri's last years. George Roberts: May I be one of many, to congratulate you and the article you wrote about Dmitri Borgmann. It was well written. Somehow or other, I wish..I wish you hadn't written it. The legend is now not the same. Jay Ames: Your article on Dmitri Borgmann certainly opened my eyes and made me better understand how eccentric he really was...I got a tad mad at him for calling me an 'outright liar' in response to 'him 'putting me right' with regard to the size of Toronto and the hugeness of our phone book...oh, well, c'est la vie, and it detracts nothing from his abilities as a wordsmith. Will Shortz: Great article on Borgmann. Tom Kurtz: Enjoyed reading about what a strange bird Dmitri was--like some mathematicians I've known. Michael Helsem: The article on Dmitri Borgmann makes me think of another irascible & eccentric logologist: Samuel Johnson. Richard Lederer: I immensely enjoyed the lead piece on D.B. Marjorie Friedman: I found [the article] absolutely fascinating as well as extremely well written. His writings and things you've told me about him made me aware that he was an eccentric; but according to this he was really crazy! A real

Howard Hughes type...it's hard to connect the man you describe with the often charming and winning personality revealed in his earlier writings. He must've deteriorated a lot as time went on. John Henrick: Enjoyed the article on Dmitri in the Nov. WW. It was nice to know some details that didn't get written down there, too.

Letters from Dmitri to the editor attest to the fact that typists didn't remain long in Borgmann employment--13 different ones between 1973 and 1978, the longest of which lasted about nine months.

Readers also liked "A Lode for Logastelli" (Jeff Grant: Great! Philip Cohen: I especially enjoyed Eric's piece. Brian Head: A splendid selection. Murray Pearce: A delightful list). Jeff Grant noted that IRRORATION was misspelled, and Philip Cohen similarly corrected COMPRACHICO and SCHOENOBATIST. Jeff Grant regretted that two of his all-time favorites didn't make it, BANGSTRY (masterful violence) and TAGHAIRM (inspiration sought by lying in a bullock's hide behind a waterfall). Philip Cohen noted that YEPSEN seems to be GOWPEN in Webster's Second and Third. Brian Head comments that a number of words on the list are well-known to the average well-educated Briton: BASTINADO, BOUSTROPHEDON, BUMF, CARYATID, CENOTAPH, CREPUSCULAR, DEFENESTRATION, DOPPELGANGER, EUPHUISTIC, GNOMON, HEMIDEMISEMIQUAVER, HORRIPILATION, POSTPRANDIAL.

Stuart Baird commented that the SUN spelling checker may leave certain words like GALUMPHING unchanged because it can find nothing close enough to suggest as a replacement.

Murray Pearce took issue with Trip Payne's assertion that the only capitalized word in Webster's Third is God--there are many capitalized trade names, such as Pabulum, Linotype, Kinetoscope, Kleenex, Kodak, Ionone, Taka-Diastase, TelAutograph, etc.

Jay Ames converted "Mary Had a Little Lamb" to Anguish Languish, using surnames from the Toronto Telephone directory:

Marry Haddad Liddell Lamb
Witt Fleece Azzaz Whiter Snowe
Ann Devry Ware Young Marry Wendt
Durr Lamm Wass Shore Ru Goh.

Hitz Followes Herr To School Wonn Day
Witcher Wasser Gaines Turr Rule
Wych Maida Kinder Laffan Pley
Tooze See Allam Innes Cool.

The nursery rhyme is often satirized. Jay Ames notes the Canadian "Ozark" version

Mary had a little lamb,
Her father shot it dead,
Now Mary takes the lamb to school
Between two hunks o' bread.

Raymond Love added

Mary had a little lamb
And it was good, she swore--
She passed along her dinner plate
And had a little more.

Or how about Brian Head's truncated

Mary had a little lamb
And the doctor fainted.

Mike Morton wrote about the Scrabble program review "Programmers write code, not coed. '1500 lines of coed' presumably is a variant on the joke (Dorothy Parker?) about 'if all the girls at Smith were laid end-to-end...'." Stuart Baird added "When I read that 'the program consists of about 1500 lines of coed' I knew that I had been away from the academic computer science environment far too long!"

Philip Cohen noted that Webster's Third Edition disagrees with the etymologies Maxey Brooke cites for his fossil words. It traces STAKE only to OE *staca*; says Provençal *banda* is "of Gmc origin" but only akin to a Gothic word; says QUIVER is of Gmc (Teutonic, in Webster's Second) origin. Maybe Webster's Third just doesn't trace the etymology as far back as Maxey Brooke's sources.

Harry Partridge amended his August 1988 Colloquy: "Grant Bohun should be Grant Gohun, or 'grant goon,' the guy that slithers from Fulb to Gug and is very up on the diffo between trattoria and ristorante." And in Kickshaws, he pointed out that the Czech sentences were Tvrdik's; he (Partridge) supplied only the translations.

Philip Cohen observes that the double negative was "thoroughly stomped" by George Orwell in "On Politics and the English Language". In it, Orwell ended up with a silly reductio ad absurdum like "A not unblack dog chased a not unwhite cat..."

Kyle Corbin noted that Timothy Wheeler missed the Pocket Dictionary ODOD rhododendron, TOTO in toto, and UTUT butut. Unparalleled is perhaps commoner than ukulele, and hippopotamus is certainly as well-known as popover. In a forthcoming article, he extends Wheeler's study of double bigram words to Webster's Second and Third Editions.

Mike Morton added the following tidbit to "Rock 'n' Rollogology": the Doors' song "L.A. Woman" includes the phrase MR MOJO RISIN' which anagrams the lead singer, JIM MORRISON.

Benjamin Zimmer adds two Webster's Second favorites to "A Lode for Logastelli": THYESTIAN BANQUET (a banquet at which human flesh is eaten), and DOG-DRAW (following an unlawfully-wounded deer by the scent of a led dog).